PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

BALANCED ASSESSMENT

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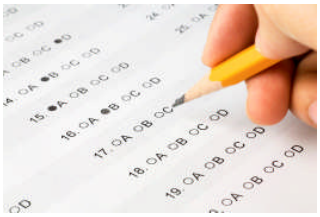

Virginia Commonwealth University

The Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

Richmond, Virginia

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR
NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

A project administered by

The Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs
Virginia Commonwealth University

Dr. William C. Bosher, Jr. Executive Director and Distinguished Professor
Dr. Ida J. Hill, Executive Producer and Project Director
Gloria K. Barber, Project Assistant

Developed and produced in cooperation with
Henrico County Public Schools Staff Development & Productions

Director and Project Advisor/Facilitator
Dr. Christopher Corallo

Asst. Director and Project Advisor
Ms. Linda Thompson

Production Facilities
Henrico County Public Schools Central Office and Varina High School
David Saunders, Production Director

Funding and technical assistance by the
Virginia Department of Education

Professional Development Toolkit for New and Beginning Teachers

The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS is a research-based video streamed program with accompanying resource documents. The program is an outgrowth of a previous Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) online mentoring study at Virginia Commonwealth University. The findings of the online mentoring study revealed twelve topics new and beginning teachers felt additional university training would have led them to more effective use of best practices in the classroom. In this program, each of the twelve topics is presented in two to six stand alone video segments. The total number of segments is forty five. Suggested uses, in addition to personal viewing by K-12 teachers for self improvement, include professional development, mentor and mentee, university prospective teacher, and small or large group training.

The facilitators are university faculty and practitioners with field experience. Each is currently involved in teacher training or serves as a staff development administrator. All are currently engaged in educational research, teaching and/or educational policy development.

The teachers in the video programs are classroom teachers. Some of them were participants in the 2006 Online Mentoring Study in which the topics for this project were identified. They represent all disciplines in K-12 grades.

Resource documents for the programs are provided as PDF files to facilitate the use of the 45 video segments. The first set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) an introduction to program facilitators, including a definition of each topic, and a list of the video segments, and (3) a research formative study summary that helped to guide the project's development. The second set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) a full text transcript for each video segment, (3) a set of problems and solutions related to each video segment in the form of a work-study guide, and (4) an annotated bibliographic summary of references and Internet links for each transcript. Many of the organizations and agencies referenced in the transcripts are actively involved in the development of video and professional development presentations that support policy and advocacy.

Every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information. Internet content, however, does appear, disappear and change over time. CEPI, as a university-based educational policy research institute endorses no specific position of any listed group.

BALANCED ASSESSMENT

SEGMENT #1 AN OVERVIEW OF BALANCED ASSESSMENT

🗁 VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT

BALANCED ASSESSMENT: Recognition of teacher-made assessment, student produced products, and standardized assessment as balanced assessment.

Facilitator: Dr. Christopher Corallo, Director of Staff Development
Henrico County Public Schools

AUDIO	VIDEO
Educational specialist, Rick Stiggins states that a balanced assessment program not only tells us how a student is learning, but it also tells us how well we are teaching. It is very important that teachers carefully plan for assessment BEFORE THEY even think about the lesson activities-specifically, how students will demonstrate that they are learning. I am Christopher Corallo with the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University. How do you know when you have a balanced assessment program in your classroom? In the next few minutes we will talk about what Rick Stiggins and others mean when they speak about balanced assessment. Rick believes a balanced assessment program has three components: 1. Teacher-made assessments 2. Student produced products, and 3. Standardized assessments. Teacher-made classroom assessments include multiple choice, short answer, open, and written and oral response, and essays. Student produced products include demonstrations, models, projects oral and/or written presentations. Standardized assessments are those that benchmark the learning process for the individual student, the class, and the school against other similar students outside the learning environment. Standardized assessments balance to the assessment process that mostly relies on classroom teacher and student assessments. Think about it this way. You are taking students on a learning trip. Your curriculum is the road map. On this trip you take a compass- these are your teacher assessments carefully benchmarking progress of each student on the learning trip and allowing you to refer to your map when you find you have veered off course. You have to make some adjustments. The student produced products are like a tour guide; they give you a bigger picture of what's going on at various points along the way. They give you more detail about what's off at that rest stop off the interstate-just like products give you more detail about how students are processing and applying the learning and the standardized assessments are like the Global	DR. CORALLO

Positioning System (GPS) in your car. It is an outside source-a satellite that keeps checking to see if you are on course. Along with these three types of assessment we also must look at the concept of formative and summative assessments. According to the National Center for Educational Accountability (2006) formative assessments must be seen as an instructional tool to use while learning is occurring in order to determine "next steps" in the teaching/learning process. Summative assessments are meant to measure learning of concepts at the end of a unit or some other designated point in time. The National Education Association report on student assessment states that all assessments in a balanced assessment system arise from the foundational understanding that the primary mission of schools is to maximize success for all students and not merely to rank students based on achievements. This is why the majority of assessment should be formative rather than summative. And one other important thing to keep in mind-maybe the MOST important thing. Teachers should think about how they will assess the learning even before they develop the lesson activities. Teachers should START their planning by asking. What is it that students will need to do to demonstrate they are learning? I asked a teacher to talk about what assessment components she used in her classroom early in her teaching career. This is what she said.	
My name is Gaynell Lyman and I am a high school science teacher. I use lots of different ways to assess my student's learning. Of course I have the typical multiple choice and short answer tests and quizzes. But I also do a lot of informal assessments that help me decide if students are "getting it." I usually carefully plan questions with each lesson plan that I know will help me determine if students are learning. I also do lots of listening to students as they work in groups to see how they are processing and applying the learning. Of course, in science we have lots of lab activities. These are student products that allow them to apply new ideas and build on their learning.	**GAYNELL LYMAN**
You heard Gaynell talk about using different types of assessments AND she really stresses how important formative assessment is to making decisions about her teaching and her student's learning. I think the most important thing she talks about is PLANNING for assessing student learning. In her case it was carefully planning questions she would ask with each lesson. How are you PLANNING for assessing your students? AND where are you putting most of your assessment efforts-in the formative assessments? Or the summative assessments?	**DR. CORALLO**

🗁 PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Ask yourself: What type of assessment do you use most often during daily practice? Why? How would you like to improve your use of assessment data to improve instruction?

Suggested use for this module:

1. **Analyze:**

Please select one of the scenarios below and problem-solve a list of possible solutions. Record your ideas in the space provided. Discuss these ideas with your other educators (mentor, colleagues, or other beginning teachers).

2. **View:**

Watch the corresponding video on this topic. How does this information change your ideas?

3. **Compare:**

Revisit the scenario selected. Next, review the section entitled, "Possible Solutions" comparing the ideas listed with your own list.

4. **Reflect:**

How will you apply this new information to your current or future classroom? What goal will you set to help you begin to change your practices? What support is needed to help you accomplish this goal?

5. **Apply:**

List the first step towards change below. Create a timeline for success and place deadlines in your personal planner as a reminder. How will you know when you have met your goals?

Scenarios 1 & 2: Balanced Assessment

Scenario 1:

Mike is a new student in third grade this year. He is something of a puzzle to his teacher after three weeks of school. He has difficulties related to reading and writing. He tends to be quiet in class. Mike recognizes some simple sight words, but cannot recognize words with more than one syllable. He enjoys hearing stories aloud and can retell many of the facts from the text. When Mike reads on his own, he sometimes has trouble remembering simple story details. One day in class recently, Mike put his head down and fails to participate in the small group lesson. How could this scenario about Mike be influenced by assessment?

Scenario 2:

This is Yolanda's first year in high school. She is a quiet student who turns in all of her work on time. She has been making A's and B's on every assignment. As the end of the nine weeks approaches, you administer a multiple-choice test on the units you have taught so far this academic year. It is a surprise when you grade Yolanda's paper and find out that she failed this important test. After a couple of months of school, you also realize that you do not know much about her background. Since Yolanda is in many classes with your colleagues, you find out that she has done poorly on all of her quarterly tests. How would you respond?

Circle the scenario that you selected below:

Scenario 1 **Scenario 2**

Record a list of your own possible solutions here:

Summary & Goal Setting:

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Classroom assessment serves as an integral practice for informing instruction. There are two main types of assessment which take place in the classroom. Formative or informal assessment happens during instruction. Summative or formal assessment occurs at the end of a teaching unit. Utilize the following suggestions to establish a learning-centered climate in your classroom:

1. **Get to know your students through**

    - investigating previous assessment information such as student records and testing results,
    - administering diagnostic instruments to determine student strengths and academic needs,
    - giving interest inventories or attitude surveys to learn more about student beliefs and pastimes, and
    - observing and gathering anecdotal notes during instruction.

2. **Questioning Techniques**

    Effective questioning during instruction will promote critical thinking and can serve as a review for previous classes. Useful questions involve all the learners in the classroom and include wait time for processing information. Questions should be stated in clear terms and match the learning targets you are currently working on in your classroom. Higher level thinking will encourage students to do more than just recall facts. Master teachers expect students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. Ask questions such as:

    - Tell me in your own words what this means.
    - Can you give me an example of this concept?
    - What would happen if…?
    - How could you solve this problem?
    - What other ways could we look at this situation?
    - What caused this person to respond this way? How do you know?
    - What would it be like if …?
    - How could you design this?
    - Could you generate a new ending?
    - Select the best option. Why did you choose this?
    - Would you recommend this…? Why or Why not?

3. **Examples of Informal Instructional Techniques for Determining Daily Student Progress**

- Quick Write: Provide students with one to two minutes at the end of class to write a quick response as their ticket out of the classroom. Encourage them to record one significant new piece of learning and one question that is still lingering after your lesson.
- 3-2-1 strategy: Ask students to record the following on an index card:
  - ✓ 3 important facts you discovered in your own words
  - ✓ 2 interesting things about the topic
  - ✓ 1 remaining question
- Two-column notes: Students fold a sheet of notebook paper in half. On the left-hand column, they take notes to synthesize the main ideas from the presentation or text. On the right-hand column, they respond personally to the ideas. Students may illustrate, comment, make connections, or generate questions to demonstrate learning.

4. **Balanced Assessment Techniques**

- Documenting student progress using a variety of methods. In addition to classroom tests and assignments, be certain to incorporate samples of student progress across time into your assessment repertoire.
- Observation notes called anecdotal records are useful for documenting day to day progress in the classroom. Try print labels with the name of each student at the top of the label. Place the sheets of labels on your clipboard. As you circulate to work with students, place the date on the label and jot down a note about what you observed. Create a page for each student and stick the labels on this page throughout the year. This will supplement grade book information and provide parents with specifics during parent conferences.
- Portfolios work well for collecting systematic work samples across time. Sample artifacts are chosen to demonstrate how the student has met learning targets in an organized way. Portfolios are used for showcasing learning, documenting progress, and evaluating differences amongst students. Portfolios include samples of student work rather than a compilation of all work completed. First, develop the contents of the collection and scoring criteria. Next, model the type of content to include and collection procedures for students. Lastly, complete the evaluation process by providing feedback to the student. Rubrics are helpful for this process.
- Self-Reflection encourages student to become part of the assessment process. Periodically ask students to provide honest feedback on their own progress. Use prompts

which require students to discuss improvements and growth over time, spotlight best efforts and demonstrate mastery of course expectations.

4. Flexible Groupings

Whether you are conducting teacher or student-led groups, it is essential to change your learning configurations to meet the needs of students. Flexible groupings contribute to learning through idea-sharing and group problem-solving. Students may be grouped according to specific learning goals, needs on a particular skill, or based on the dynamics of the activity you are conducting. Students may work in small groups or with partners. Consider student personalities and strengths when creating grouping configurations. Make sure that the group task and roles are clear and circulate often to monitor.

🗁 ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Overall teachers spend a significant amount of time each week outside of the normal school day both working with students and working on school-related activities without students present. These additional hours argue that defining a teacher's performance exclusively in terms of classroom instruction may be ignoring other important responsibilities that teachers are often willing to take on, such as tutoring and facilitating extracurricular activities.

  Burian-Fitzgrald, Marisa & Harris, Debbi. (2004). *Giving 110%: Portrait of a Michigan teacher's work week.* Retrieved October 1, 2007, from **http://www.epc.msu.edu/publications/REPORT/report22.pdf**

- Research on learning to teach has implications for the design of induction and mentoring programs: Giving beginning teachers difficult teaching assignments (multiple preparations, subjects out of their field, or demanding extracurricular assignments) is not only stressful for them but impedes the process of learning to teach.

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